



Educate, Participate, Motivate

FACTS ABOUT NOVICE DRIVER CRASH RISK

National Facts (2002)

- Teen drivers have the highest crash risk of any age group. Young drivers between 15 and 20 years old accounted for 6.6% (12.6 million) of the total number of licensed drivers, but they were involved in 14% of fatal crashes and 16% percent of all police-reported crashes.
- The crash rate for 16 year-olds is higher than any other age. They have the least driving experience and are the mostly likely to place themselves in harms way by taking unnecessary risks.
- Fully implemented graduated driver licensing systems have reduced teen crashes by as much as 60%.
- Sixty-two percent of teen passenger deaths in 2001 occurred in a vehicle driven by a novice driver.
- Distracted driving or lapses in attention is the most predominant crash causation factor.
- The estimated economic cost of police-reported crashes involving drivers between 15 and 20 years old was \$40.8 billion.
- Of the young drivers killed in crashes, 24% were intoxicated.¹
- Young drivers are less likely to wear safety belts than other ages. For example, of the young drivers who had been drinking and were killed in crashes, 77 % were unrestrained. Safety belts reduce the risk of death by 45% and serious injury to front seat occupants by 50%.
- Thirty-seven percent of 16-year old drivers in fatal crashes were speeding.
- The presence of another teen in the car driven by a beginning driver increases the likelihood of a crash and the number is higher for each additional teen passenger. More than half of fatal crashes involving new drivers occurs when passengers younger than 20 are being transported and there is no adult in the car.
- Most fatal crashes occur at night when driving is more difficult for teens and their trips are likely to be recreational. These are times when teens are more susceptible to distraction and risk taking.

¹ About three in every 10 Americans will be involved in an alcohol-related crash at some point in their lives. No one is safe when it comes to impaired driving – an alarming 68 percent of children killed in alcohol-related crashes were riding in a car with a drinking driver.